

Chief of Naval Operations
HASC Opening Statement April 5, 2017

- Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Smith, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for opportunity to discuss impacts that another Continuing Resolution would have on the Navy.
- Two points I want to clearly convey this morning:
 - Need FY17 bill in order to keep Navy programs and key investments moving forward - help to arrest further deepening of Navy readiness hole
 - In addition to the FY17 bill - Navy will also need the funds in the Request for Additional Appropriations to recover readiness this year and for the near future
- There is a growing gap between the missions that we are asking our Navy to do, and the unreliability and shortage of resources provided to accomplish them.
- Got to where we are today because of 15 years of operating at wartime pace -- EISENHOWER strike group deployed five times in last seven years. Contrast that level of effort with 8 years of continuing resolutions and 5 years of budget restrictions imposed by the Budget Control Act
- This gap has created years of stress, stress over and above the inherent stress of deployed operations. The Navy team - sailors, civilians, and their families - has been absorbing that stress. And if we fail to provide them with adequate resources, it will get worse.
- If don't get funding just described:
 - Lots of aviators won't fly - they can't train
 - Won't have spares to fix the planes
 - Won't have gas to fly them

- May not have bonuses to keep our pilots in the service
 - Won't have ready aircraft for those who will fly tomorrow
- Lots of Sailors won't go to sea
 - Can't afford the maintenance to fix the ships
 - Can't afford the gas to steam them
 - Ships will remain tied up to the pier
- In many ways, these effects are irreversible. You can't get lost training time back...we will be less proficient when we deploy.
 - Our pilots will be less experienced - a daunting fact when you consider what we're asking of them in wartime
 - Our Sailors will have less time at sea to practice together, to achieve the intricate teamwork needed to win in modern warfare.
- And the stress won't stop when they return to home port
 - Will only allow for one month notice before moving, placing huge burden on families and especially those with children
 - Will continue to ask people to work in substandard conditions. Over 6000 buildings -- and growing -- in dismal condition awaiting repair, replacement, or demolition
- At unit level,
 - Will have to shut down air wings in the short term; in the long term, the shortage of airplanes will get worse.
 - Will delay important upgrades that help us keep pace with the threat, putting sailors at greater risk from cyber attacks and growing threat of anti-ship missiles in the areas they routinely operate.
 - Submarines will lose certification to dive, and ships will be stuck at the pier.

- Failing to maintain our equipment has same effect as cutting force structure
 - Whether we leave a ship tied up because it's not repaired or we decide not to build a new ship...both mean one less ship at sea
 - Not being able to fly an existing airplane or not buying a new aircraft...both mean one less plane in the air.
- This is not a theoretical debate.
- While we talk about whether to keep ships in port and aircraft on the ground, our competitors are making steady progress, and they are gaining on us.
- America's challenges are growing as other nations expand and operate their fleets in the Pacific, Atlantic, Indian and Arctic Oceans, extending their influence over trade routes that are lifeblood of the international economy - including ours
- I just got back from Rota, Spain, where I saw our Sailors in action. Visited USS ROSS, which is now in the increasingly contested waters of the eastern Mediterranean. Those sailors know that they are sailing into harm's way.
- But they took an oath to support and defend the Constitution, and they live up to their commitment every day, undaunted by the competition. And their teammates do this each day too, all around the world. They are tough, dedicated and proud of what they do.
- Back here at home, there's less evidence that we get it -- there is a tangible lack of urgency. We're not doing what we should to help them win. In fact, we are here today to discuss a plan that would make their lives harder, that would shrink their advantage still further.
- On behalf of Navy team, am asking that you pass the FY17 bill, along with the Request for Additional Appropriations. It will make us more ready, more competitive, and relieve a lot of the stress on our people. Together we can find ways to maintain our edge - so much is at stake.
- Thank you -- look forward to your questions.